

CONT
Satellite file**SECRET**

COR - 0770

25 February 1960

RECIPIENT: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT: Acting Director, DDCI *w.p.*

SUBJECT: SONOMA in 1961

25X1A

Following our conversation just prior to your departure, I went to see [redacted] on the above subject and reported your feeling that if consideration was to be given to a SONOMA type program in Q1 1961 the long lead time required that a decision be made very soon. I suggested that SONOMA might not be flying in the summer of 1961 and that unless good SAMOS photography would be available by that summer, there could be a gap in over-flight collection.

2. I stressed that you are not proposing anything but are simply asking a question. At the same time I suggested that other branches of the Agency would be very much interested in the answer to the question and would wish to be consulted.

3. On the assumption that SONOMA would not be operating in 1961, Dr. [redacted] agreed that there probably would be a gap. The SAMOS program now schedules some 401 and 52 shots in the fall of 1960 and the spring of 1961. These carry in-flight processing with resultant and in his opinion cannot produce useful ground resolution. The first photographic camera, the B-3, with potentially good resolution through its [redacted] focal length, is not scheduled until August of 1961, and this date will likely slip.

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4. He then asked what our views were as to the need of filling this gap with SONOMA photography. He stated that we expected to see in 1960 with our present coverage taking into account operational problems and expected cloud cover. Assuming this experience what did we need to see in 1961?

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5. Mr. Robert [redacted] and I returned on 16 February with [redacted]

6. Against known targets and suspected target areas, Mr. Robert showed the coverage to date, the SONOMA coverage planned through 1960, indicated the areas that would remain, stressed the value of "repeat" coverage and showed how SONOMA in 1960 or 1961 could be useful to other programs in pointing to areas which should be re-photographed by more sophisticated systems.

7. [redacted] assumed five successful shots in the 1960 program and showed the coverage that could be expected with three-day orbits. Taking weather into account he concluded that in the interesting areas the chance of photographing any particular point approximated [redacted]. He assumed a ground resolution of [redacted] feet.

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3. He expressed doubts that there would be armed overflights of USSR in 1963.

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2. [redacted] ended the discussion by stating his belief that there should be an extension of the COMINT program into 1963. He seemed to feel that there should be a minimum of some eight shots, and agreed that they should carry improved versions of the present system rather than a complete redesign. He hopes to discuss ways and means with you as soon as possible after your return.

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[redacted]
Chief, Development Branch
PRO-10/P

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